Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 18808 220023Z ACTION EUR-12

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R 171345Z NOV 77 ZUI URSVC 1148W FM AMEMBASSY ROME TO HQ AFOSI WASHDC//CS 2187TH COMMGRP AVIANO AB/CC INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8516 40TH TACGRP AVIANO AB/CC

CONFIDENTIAL ROME 18808

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AODE, MILI, PINR, IT

SUBJECT: LOCATION OF DIST 65 AFOSI

1. IN A RECENT MESSAGE TO ALL AMBASSADORS, THE PRESIDENT NOTED:

"THE SIZE OF OUR REPRESENTATION ABROAD MUST BE RELATED TO A STRINGENT APPRAISAL OF POLICY AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, AND THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL OF ALL AGENCIES MUST BE KEPT AT THE MINIMUM NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES. I CONSIDER THIS TO BE ONE OF YOUR MOST IMPORTANT GOALS."

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRESIDENT'S WISHES THIS EMBASSY HAS BEEN EXAMINING THE SIZE AND FUNCTION OF ALL AGENCIES, REPRESENTED IN ROME, THAT ARE EITHER DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO THE AMBASSADOR OR WHOSE PRESENCE HAS AN IMPACT ON THE CONDUCT OF OUR RELATIONS WITH ITALY. IT IS CLEAR THAT SOME OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF OFFICIAL AMERICAN AGENCIES ASSIGNED TO ROME HAVE NO DIRECT AND PERSUASIVE NEED TO BE ESTABLISHED HERE AND COULD CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 18808 220023Z

OPERATE AS EFFECTIVELY FROM OTHER LOCATIONS IN ITALY, ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE OR THE UNITED STATES. DIST 65
AFOSI (13 PERSONNEL) AND ITS SUPPORT COMMUNICATIONS ORGANIZATION THE 2187TH COMM. GRP. (6 PERSONNEL), PRESENTLY ESTABLISHED AT ROME'S CIAMPINO AIRPORT, IS ONE OF THOSE.

- 3. THE PRESENCE AT THIS MISSION OF A SUBORDINATE UNIT, AFOSI DET. 6505 (3 PERSONS), PERFORMING TASKS REQUIRING ACCESS TO AUTHORITIES IN THE CAPITAL CITY, SUGGESTS THAT ANY RESIDUAL SIMILAR FUNCTIONS OF THE CIAMPINO GROUP COULD BE ABSORBED BY THE DETACHMENT. THE EMBASSY WOULD SUPPORT THE INCREASE OF ONE POSITION AT THE DETACHMENT FOR THAT PURPOSE. THE DIST. 65 AFOSI AND THE 2187TH COMM. GRP. HOWEVER, SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED ELSEWHERE IN ITALY, PREFERABLY TO A MILITARY FACILITY, FROM WHICH IT CAN PERFORM ITS SUPERVISORY FUNCTION OVER AFOSI DETACHMENTS AND WHERE VISIBILITY IS LESS, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE AND TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES EXIST TO PERMIT REQUIRED TRAVEL WITHIN ITALY. WE BELIEVE AVIANO AIR BASE BEST MEETS THOSE CRITERIA.
- 4. WE ARE INFORMED THAT DIST. 65 AFOSI HAS BEEN ASKED BY ITALIAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITIES TO VACATE THE PREMISES PRESENTLY OCCUPIED. ASSUMING THAT FOSI CAN DELAY RELINQUISHING ITS PRESENT QUARTERS UNTIL THEN, WE RECOMMEND THAT THE TRANSFER OUT OF ROME TAKE PLACE IN THE SPRING OF 1978 DURING THE PEAK PERSONNEL EXCHANGE PERIOD TO AVOID UNNECESSARY DUPLICATIVE TRAVEL EXPENSE.
- 5. THE FOREGOING HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH LT. COL. CLIFFORT MOUTON, COMMANDER OF DIST. 65 AFOSI. COL. MOUTON FORE-CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ROME 18808 220023Z

SEES NO MAJOR IMPEDIMENTS PROVIDING HE HAS HQ. CONCURRENCE AND ADEQUATE OFFICE SPACE CAN BE PROVIDED BY THE SUPPORT MILITARY INSTALLATION.GARDNER

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